

4VAC15-50-120. Game: Bear: Bear hound training season.

Summary:

The proposal is to i) change the text to a list of counties and cities where the bear hound training season is allowed and ii) fix an omission made by the registrar in 2017

Proposed language of amendment:

4VAC15-50-120. Bear Hound Training Season.

A. It shall be lawful to chase black bear with dogs, without capturing or taking, from August 1 through the last Saturday in September, both dates inclusive, in ~~all counties and cities or in the portions in which bear hunting is permitted except in the Counties of Accomack, Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Campbell, Caroline, Charles City, Chesterfield, Clarke, Cumberland, Dinwiddie, Essex, Fairfax, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Frederick, Gloucester, Goochland, Grayson (west of Route 16), Halifax, Hanover, Henrico, Henry, Isle of Wight, James City, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Loudoun, Louisa, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northampton, Northumberland, Nottoway, Orange, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, Prince William, Richmond, Roanoke (south of Interstate 81), Smyth (that part south of Interstate 81 and west of Route 16), Southampton, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Surry, Sussex, Westmoreland, and York, and in the cities of Hampton, Newport News and Norfolk.~~ the counties of Albemarle, Alleghany, Amherst, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Brunswick, Buchanan, Carroll, Charlotte, Craig, Culpeper, Dickenson, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Grayson (east of Route 16), Greene, Greenville, Highland, Lee, Lunenburg, Madison, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Nelson, Page, Pulaski, Rappahannock, Roanoke (west of I-81), Rockbridge, Rockingham, Russell, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth (except for the part southeast of I-81 and west of State Route 16), Tazewell, Warren, Washington (northwest of I-81), Wise, and Wythe and the cities of Chesapeake, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach.

B. It shall be lawful to chase black bear with dogs, without capturing or taking, from the Saturday prior to the third Monday in November and for 14 days following, both dates inclusive, in the Counties of Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Brunswick, Campbell (east of the Norfolk Southern Railroad), Charles City, Charlotte, Cumberland, Essex, Gloucester, Greenville, Halifax, Isle of Wight, James City, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Lunenburg, Mathews, Mecklenburg, Middlesex, New Kent, Northumberland, Nottoway, Pittsylvania (east of the Norfolk Southern Railroad), Prince Edward, Prince George, Richmond, Southampton, Surry, Sussex, Westmoreland, and York.

C. It shall be unlawful to have in possession a firearm, bow, crossbow, or any weapon capable of taking a black bear while participating in the bear hound training season. The meaning of "possession" for the purpose of this section shall include having a firearm, bow, crossbow, or any weapon capable of taking a black bear in or on one's person, vehicle, or conveyance.

Rationale:

No changes are being proposed to hound training areas. When first established, bear hound training season was only allowed in counties where bear hunting was permitted in a limited portion of Virginia. Over time, the entire Commonwealth was opened to bear hunting and more localities were included in training season. This change will alleviate confusion and simplify the text of the regulation. This proposal would change section A to define where training is allowed instead of where it is not allowed, similar to the way section B is written. Further, when hound training was expanded south of I-81 in 2015, a part of Washington County was excluded and submitted in the regulation packet as an exception but was not included in the official regulation language by the registrar. Washington County south of I-81 has never had a training season and the county has been excluded in the hunting and trapping digest since 2015.